

THE GULL



Golden Gate Audubon Society

Berkeley, California

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June 1990

**CELEBRATE THE SOLSTICE
AND OUR ANNUAL MEETING**

You are invited to join us on Thursday evening, June 21, in Berkeley's Tilden Park at the Meadows Picnic Area for a picnic to honor our annual conservation award winners, to install our new officers and to socialize. The chapter will provide salad and non-alcoholic beverages, but we ask you to bring a dessert to share, and your own main dish. To eliminate plastic, paper and styrofoam, please bring your own utensils, plates and cups. We will have charcoal grills hot and available and soapy water for washing your utensils, etc. The time is 5 p.m. until sunset. Please call the office, 843-2222, to let us know that you will be coming.

Directions to the Meadows Picnic Area: enter Tilden Park at Wildcat Canyon, Grizzly Peak and Spruce Street entrance, which is a left hand turn onto Canyon Drive at that intersection. At the foot of Canyon Drive make a right turn past the pony rides and continue until you see a meadow on your left. Our signs will guide you! Please call the office for more explicit directions if you are confused.

We hope you will join in our continuing celebration of the Earth's natural processes.

BIRDATHON HURRAHS

Many, many thanks to all the participants in our 1990 BIRDATHON! While the dollars are not final the team sighting reports are in. We had a whopping twenty teams in the field with two in Texas, one in the Mono Basin, and one in Spain! Individual and team efforts were heroic in the face of high dry winds in most of northern California on BIRDATHON weekend. But weather notwithstanding, the teams saw and heard goodly numbers.

To no one's surprise, the SEMI-PULVERIZED PLOVERS led the field with 184 species, all seen in Marin County. Next came the NOT-SO-OLD-SQUAWS with 180, the LOONATICKS with 179 and the PAURQUES saw 168 in Texas. Then in alphabetic order, ALLEN'S HUMMERS-148, BEASTS OF BIRDIN'-163, CAJUN COUCH-BIRDS-95, CLEAN-UP SANDPIPERS-151, EMMY'S EGRETS-59, GRAY JAYS-70, GREAT BASIN BUSH-BEATERS-112, MINES ROAD-RUNNERS-88, MURPHY'S MOB-111, PAJARO-

(continued on next page)

THONERS-46, SO-WHAT OWLS-116, URBAN TYRANTS-156, YARDBIRDS-114, TOMALES BAY TROOPERS-114, and the OLD COOTS-105. Golden Gate and Marin Audubon chapters and Mono Lake thank one and all for their efforts with both binoculars and with the paper work and organizational details. We especially thank Mrs. Nice for her words of wisdom and counsel. Next month we will provide the wrap-up and financial details, but early estimates indicate that you have been very generous.

**THANKS TO ALL FOR A
SUCCESSFUL BIRDATHON 1990!**

A GOOD MAN IS GONE

Paul Covel died in May. The news brought tears to my eyes and, I'm sure, to many others. His was a life dedicated to caring. Caring about the natural world and all the things in it.

Paul was the first park naturalist of the nation's first municipal wildlife refuge, the Lake Merritt Waterfowl Refuge. Paul authored two wonderfully entertaining books, *People Are For The Birds*, and *Beacons Along A Naturalist's Trail*, both published by Western Interpretive Press.

And Paul loved nature and people and strove all his life to educate the one about the other. He strove to make our modern civilization understand its need to preserve and live with its natural heritage, to appreciate its native plants and wildlife.

Paul was simply tireless in working for this cause, leading fieldtrips, writing

letters, going to meetings. All the things a good conservationist does, Paul did, and more.

Why am I writing all this? Paul Covel was a great man, he inspired us all, he will not be replaced. But we can try and carry on his work. All our sympathy to his wife, Marion.

—Arthur Feinstein

FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Friday-Sunday, June 1-3—Birding
by Ear in Yosemite.

Saturday-Sunday, June 9-10—
Yuba Pass and vicinity.

Wednesday, June 13—Mini-trip to
Redwood Regional Park.

For details on the above trips see *The GULL* for May.

Saturday/Sunday, June 16-17—
Mono Basin. Meet at 8 a.m. at Mono County Park 5 miles north of Lee Vining and just east of Hwy. 395. To get to Mono Basin take Hwy. 120 over Tioga Pass to the town of Lee Vining and proceed north to the meeting place. (An alternate route is around Lake Tahoe to Hwy. 395 and then south to Mono County Park.)

We will spend Saturday birding the north side of the lake looking for common residents in various habitats. This is the day of the Annual Breeding Bird Census at Mono Lake, and we will be helping by recording any nesting behavior we see. After a good day of birding we will meet at 6:30 p.m. at Mono County Park for a potluck (weather permitting).

On Sunday we will meet at 8 a.m. at

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the turnoff from Hwy. 120 to South Tufa State Preserve. Take Hwy. 395 south from Lee Vining to Hwy. 120 east. Turn left and proceed to South Tufa State Preserve turnoff. We will bird this area and the Jeffrey Pine forest south and east of here looking for Gray Flycatchers, Gnatcatchers and other Mono Basin specialties.

Be prepared for hot bright sun and/or cold wind and rain. The elevation of the basin is 6400 ft. and the temperature may drop at night. Bring lunches for both days and be prepared to hike.

Forest Service Campgrounds are available southwest of Lee Vining in Lee Vining Canyon, and north of town up Lundy Canyon. Motels in Lee Vining include: Best Western Lakeview Motel (619/647-6543), Gateway Motel (619/647-6467), and Murphey's Motel (619/647-6316). Leaders: Helen and Paul Green (526-5943). (✓)

Friday-Sunday, June 22-24—Lassen Volcanic National Park. Join the Murphy family on the annual GGAS family camping excursion to Lassen. In past years we have seen Willow, Hammond's, and Dusky Flycatchers, Black Swift, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Townsend's Solitaire, Mountain Bluebird, Calliope Hummingbird, Black-backed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker and most of the warblers and finches that breed in the mountains.

The more serious birders will meet at the Manzanita Lake Campgrounds store at 6:30 a.m. on Friday and Sunday. We will bird around the lake for 2-3 hours, return to camp for a quick breakfast and meet at the store for another outing at 10:30. On Friday we will take a leisurely hike of about 3 miles on one of Lassen's beautiful trails. (We may climb as much as 700 ft.) Wear sturdy shoes and bring lunch and liquids. Suntan lotion, a hat, mosquito repellent and warm clothing may also be necessary.

Saturday is a special day for everyone. We will meet by the camp store at 7:30 a.m. and caravan north to Burney Falls, Fall River Valley and Baum Lake. Bring lunch and liquids. This all day excursion of about 100 miles will include a 2 or 3 hour swim at Lake Britton. If you forget your swimsuit, the trails at Burney Park offer a wonderful diversion, and fishermen can try their luck in some of northern California's finest trout streams. Since this is a long and tiring day we suggest a get-together for dinner at Uncle Runt's, a true center of grilled gourmet cuisine.

Stop by our campsite for further information. We will have a campfire every evening beginning at 8 p.m. Bring your own chair (and cup of wine if you choose). We will provide hot water for tea or coffee. Check the campground bulletin boards or the office at Doane's for our poster and campsite number and any last minute changes in the schedule.

Sunday we will meet at 10:30 a.m. to drive through the park—making frequent stops for birding. We should reach the south entrance around 1 p.m., depending upon how long we play in the snow at the summit. (Bring warm gloves, and a plastic garbage bag for a mini-toboggan.)

From the Bay Area drive north on I-5 to its junction with Hwy. 44 in Redding. Go east on Hwy. 44 to the northwest entrance of Lassen. Camping facilities are available at Manzanita Lake. Lodging is available about 15 miles north of the park at Doane's Hat Creek Resort, Old Station (916-335-7121). Other information can be obtained from the park headquarters, Mineral, Ca. 96063. Leaders: Dan and Joan Murphy (564-0074). \$(✓)

Sunday, June 24—Trip to Farallon Islands. See *The GULL* for May for details, p. 80.

Sunday, July 8—Chimney Rock,

Point Reyes National Seashore. (This trip is tentative. Call first.) Join us for our annual trip to see nesting Black Oystercatchers and Western Gulls. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Point Reyes National Seashore Headquarters (one mile west of Olema). We will caravan to the coast. Bring lunch, liquids, and a scope if you have one. Leader: Betty Short (921-3020, work phone).

Trips marked with \$ go to parks and other sites that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (✓).

Problems: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chmn. (524-2399).

Plan Ahead:

Aug. 2-5—Backpacking to Snag Lake, Lassen Volcanic National Park. Leaders: David Rice and Robin Pulich.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

OBSERVATIONS THROUGH APRIL 27

The 1-month lead-time required for this column makes it a bit ridiculous to be proclaiming once again that spring has truly sprung when it is obvious by publication time that most of our summer visitors have not only arrived, they've nested and may even be feeding young already. At the beginning of May, however, birds are still returning—Western Wood Pewee, Yellow Warbler, Summer Tanager and Lazuli Bunting have all begun to arrive in the last week—added to the leafing trees and the blooming flowers, there's a feeling in the air that, well . . . spring has sprung. And we're in the fourth year of a drought cycle. The conclusions about its effect on local bird populations will have to be drawn by researchers from historical and ongoing banding and nesting data, but I might note, on a very small scale, a trip out Mines

Road indicated that the flowering tobacco and monkey flower, although in bloom, were much reduced from previous years. Now, it may be that Caltrans, in its infinite wisdom, has seen fit to instigate a "thinning" program, but the supposition of our group was lack of rainfall had resulted in decreased vegetation. It doesn't take a great scientific mind to conclude that birds that depend on these plants as well as birds that depend on insects that depend on these plants are going to be affected by these changes—the question is to what extent and for how long. The answer may come down the road sometime, or it may never come at all—when the rain forests in Central and South America are being cut down, and migratory stopover spots are giving way to inexorable development and suburban sprawl, and the use of pesticides and fertilizers continues, who's to say how the drought comes in to all of this. Spring, for all its bright and airy joy, has a certain darkness.

* * *

There were a couple of good places to be in April: for those who like their seabirds on firm footing and dry land, Pigeon Point, on the San Mateo coast, is a spot to keep in mind—Northern Fulmar (19), Pink-footed Shearwater (single individuals), Sooty Shearwater (up to 207), Brant (571), Pomarine (4) and Parasitic (2) Jaegers, **Common Black-headed Gull** (1 on the 7th), Black-legged Kittiwake (1), Marbled Murrelet (8), Rhinoceros Auklet (up to 81), and Tufted Puffin (1) were all seen from here (PJM, SMO, BS, fide RSTh). A pelagic trip out of Princeton Harbor on March 31 had twenty Black-footed (MLE) and one **Laysan Albatross** (RSTh), Short-tailed Shearwater (fide MLE), Parasitic Jaeger (MLE), Black-legged Kittiwake (ISa), and six to ten Ancient Murrelets (MLE). Early in the month, Monterey

yielded up an immature **Masked Booby**, photographed from a fishing boat 2 miles off Pt. Lobos on the 5th (fide DR), the Harlequin Duck (RS), two Thick-billed Murres, holdovers from earlier in the winter, one off Cannery Row (LCo, mob), and one further out (RS), and a Xantus Murrelet (LCo).

And, of course, the Bolinas Sewer Ponds remained a center of interest throughout the month. The **Garganey** metamorphosed into a gorgeous breeding-plumage male—deep chestnut head with bright and racily-downswept eyebrows, gray sides with delicate darker gray vermiculations, long, light-edged scapulars—and stayed around with the male Blue-winged Teal who was joined by a female midway through the month (KH, mob). The constant attendance insured that an American Bittern (KH), infrequently seen in Marin County, a hybrid American Green-winged X Common Teal (DDeS fide KH), and the Bolinas Lagoon Harlequin Duck (mob) were seen and reported.

To the far north, the **Yellow-billed Loon** at Trinidad Harbor remained through the 15th (JMa, RAE, MFg, BED). Closer to home, the San Francisco male Tufted Duck moved once more, this time to Lake Merced (mob) and remained through the month. A female, probably the same individual seen last fall, was seen at Warm Springs in Alameda County on the 4th (LRF). The **King Eider** at the Fish Docks continued to feed quite far out in Drakes Bay and consequently was seen with decreasing frequency (mob).

Shorebird censusing in the South Bay led to discovery of seventy-five Greater Yellowlegs, forty-eight Lesser Yellowlegs and a **Ruff** on Turk Island on the 4th (WDS fide LJP, LJP, JMHu). The Ruff at the Hayward Shoreline was present through the 17th (mob). The Lesser

Golden Plover flock, now five and mostly in breeding plumage, remained at the Spaletta Plateau (RS), and a **Baird's Sandpiper**, a regular visitor in the fall when we usually see young birds in fresh plumage, but an exceeding rarity in the spring, was found at Horseshoe Pond at Pt. Reyes on the 13th (LES). A veritable horde of Surf-birds (44) showed up at Indian Head State Beach on the 22nd (RS fide KH).

An adult **Franklin's Gull** was seen at Coyote Hills on the 14th (RS); fifteen Common Terns were at Pt. Reyes on the 22nd (RS fide KH); and the first Least Tern of the year was spotted at Alameda South Shore on the 15th (JHu).

The Mines Road circuit, including San Antonio Valley and Del Puerto Canyon, produced the usual flurry of sightings late in the month: Costa's Hummingbird (JMR); Lewis' Woodpecker (JMR); and Yellow-breasted Chat (ELb, JMR). A Pileated Woodpecker made himself abundantly heard in Canyon throughout the month (HNa, JSC, DSi); another was spotted at Bothe-Napa on the 14th (ISa, MLR).

A Hammond's Flycatcher was seen at Dry Creek Regional Park on the 22nd (RJR). Pine Lake Park in SF really doesn't seem much like SE Arizona, but the Dusky-capped Flycatcher obviously feels at home—it's been there since Christmas (mob).

In what may be a novel answer to usurpation of nest holes, Western Bluebirds were observed building nests in prior-year Cliff Swallow nests near Las Gallinas (LRF).

WARBLERS: Tennessee, through the 1st in GG Park (ASH, MJL) and at Pine Lake Park on the 8th (DSg); **Northern Parula** on Gazos Creek Rd. on the 21st (SSc); Palm in Bolinas on the 18th (KH), Russian Gulch on the 21st

(DHf fide DN) and at Drake's Beach on the 22nd (RS fide KH); American Redstart in GG Park through the 7th (mob); and Yellow-breasted Chat at Bothe-Napa on the 14th (ISa, MLR).

The Harris' Sparrow in Penngrove, now a singing adult, continued to be seen through April (mob). The two **Summer Tanagers**, Pine Lake Park and GG Park, were last seen the 8th and 7th respectively (mob). And finally, an adult male **Lark Bunting** was found in San Lorenzo on the 14th (RJR).

One of the interesting things about this time of year is that while our regular migrants arrive in March, April and early May, the more unusual songbirds tend to be seen in late May and June. Keeping that in mind, search the oases, beat the bushes, and seek out those isolated stands of trees this month. OBSERVERS

Luke Cole, David DeSante, Ann Dewart, Bruce Duell, Richard A. Erickson, Michael L. Ezekial, Leora Feeney, Mike Feighner, Keith Hansen, David Hoffman, Alan S. Hopkins, Joan M. Humphrey, Joel Hurd, Michael J. Lippsemeyer, Earl Lebow, many observers, John Mariani, Peter J. Metropulos, Scott Morrical, Hope Nathan, Dan Nelson, Lina Jane Prairie, Jean M. Richmond, Robert J. Richmond, Don Roberson, Mary Louise Rosegay, Barry Sauppe, Ivan Samuels, Steve Schafer, W. David Shuford, Dianne Sierra (DSi), Dan Singer (DSg), Rich Stallcup, Lynn E. Stenzel, Ron S. Thorn.

—ANN DEWART
719 Beatie Street
Oakland, CA 94606
(415) 763-3010



GGAS CONSERVATION AWARDS FOR 1989

Every year the Golden Gate Audubon Society presents to two deserving environmentalists its Elsie Roemer Conservation Awards. These awards commemorate one of our Chapters' most ardent battlers for environmental protection.

This year we have three award winners, one from outside the chapter and two chapter members. Our "out-of-Chapter" award winner is **Eben McMillan**. We're really thrilled to be giving Eben this award. The only question is, what took us so long to get around to it? Eben is, and always will be, known to most of us as the man who introduced us to the Condor, and the man who struggled the hardest to preserve these awesome creatures in their natural environment, free and flying.

Eben was born and has lived most of his life near the Carrizo Plain, home of the Condor. Eben led the fight against the captive breeding program for these birds, arguing that it was most important to preserve their habitat and have them living in it. GGAS supported this position throughout that struggle, and Eben led many field trips for our Chapter so that we could get to see the Condor and learn to appreciate its uniqueness and its right to live in its natural habitat.

Whether the captive breeding program works or not only time will tell, but the condor has not been seen in nature for quite a few years now. And although they have been breeding in captivity, the question remains whether they will ever be released back into their home territory, and if so will these birds survive? Recent studies have shown that some captive bred birds don't know

how to search for food when released into the wild. Studies on a non-predator bird species showed that the released birds didn't recognize the defensive benefits of flocking. Will the captive bred condors also not instinctively know all their race's secrets of how to live in the wild?

These questions aside, Eben's wonderful insights into our natural world continue to inspire us. For the last few years Eben has again been leading field trips for our Chapter. He has again taken us to the Carrizo Plains and has made us realize that it was not only the Condor that deserved to be left alone but that much of nature must be left to itself if it is to survive.

Eben has also been a leader in the fight to eliminate the use of lead shot in hunting. As you probably know, the ingestions of lead shot was the cause of death for many hundreds of thousands of waterfowl, and it was also the most likely cause for the death of many of the last wild condors. The fight to eliminate lead shot has been partly successful, since lead shot is now forbidden in duck hunting. The problem still exists for upland hunting, and the Condor, if ever released to the wild, and many other carrion eating species, remain at risk.

Eben epitomizes the conservation ethic. His concern for the preservation of natural ecologies and his dedication and unswerving commitment to that cause are an inspiration for all of us. Thank you Eben.

For a more complete history of the Condor and Eben McMillan, and for a tremendously enjoyable read, we recommend, *In Condor Country*, by David Darlington, published by Houghton Mifflin Company (1987).

Bruce Walker is a member of our East Bay Conservation Committee, and

a truly dedicated conservationist with seemingly endless energy.

An artist, living in Emeryville, Bruce began to notice the harmful impacts that the sculptures were having on the Emeryville Crescent wetlands. Bruce's first actions for GGAS involved being a liaison between GGAS and the artist community. The extent of Bruce's success can be easily judged by seeing how few new sculptures are marring the marsh.

From that beginning, Bruce went on to work on saving the Crescent from development. Thanks, in part, to Bruce's efforts the City of Emeryville has declared that the Public Trust uses appropriate to this area are those of open space and wildlife habitat.

From this Bruce went on to the environmental initiative process. Coordinating the signature gathering for the CALPAW initiative, Bruce helped bring in over 120,000 signatures. Bruce also coordinated the East Bay Regional Park District Prop. AA initiative. Between the two propositions, over \$1 billion for land acquisition has been generated.

Bruce was recently elected GGAS's new President. We can be sure our Chapter is in good hands and will continue to lead the Bay Area's fight to preserve its natural resources.

Jan Andersen, our second Chapter award winner, has been a member of the San Francisco Conservation Committee for many years. Jan works on an incredible number of bird censuses around the Bay. One census, for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, was unhappily interrupted when the farmer who owned the land drained the pond that Jan was censusing (a Tufted duck pond, no less). Jan got her feet wet in the regulatory arena in attempting to

save this pond. Jan is currently doing census work for PRBO and is part of our census team for the Presidio.

Jan has continued and increased her conservation commitment by becoming a board member of Friends of Candlestick. This is an advisory Committee to Candlestick State Recreation Area. Jan is working to establish a 34-acre wetland in this Park, at Yosemite Creek. (If you're interested in helping with this project call Jan—922-5866).

Jan is a wonderful example of a birder who came to the realization that birding and conservation are inextricably related. To continue to enjoy the former we must take part in the latter.

Jan is also a GGAS board member. Running from GGAS to Candlestick board meetings, and from GGAS conservation committee meetings to her census obligations, Jan epitomizes today's committed conservationist.

And What You Can Do

Don't be intimidated by these incredibly energetic people. You don't have to spend all your time on conservation in order to have an impact. A short letter or phone call can make the difference in deciding an issue.

There is a role for everyone in these critical campaigns. Join us! Join our Action Alert team. Send us your name and address and phone number and we will send you Action Alerts asking you to write on critical issues. You won't get too many, and you won't be overwhelmed, but if you join us you will make a difference.

And for those of you with more time, please join our Conservation Committees, S.F. or East Bay. We meet once a month, call the office (843-2222) for more information.

—ARTHUR FEINSTEIN

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH DEPENDS ON VOLUNTEERS

Docent training begins in September 1990. Call now: (415) 868-9244 and enrich your life. Experience nature through the eyes of children. Encourage young people to protect the environment.

ANCIENT FOREST QUILT

Helen Green and Kathy Ritter and their gang of ten have done it again! This time it's a magnificent quilt depicting the big trees and flora and animals that make up the ecosystem of the Ancient Forest*. It is the top prize in a drawing to raise money for legal expenses to protect the Headwaters Forest/MAXXAM and Sanctuary Forest in Northern California. The quilt was a year in the making by these expert quilters—remember the Wetlands and Mono Lake Quilts? These people have done what they can for the forest and, now, money is needed to save it. There are a number of other donated prizes, too. The drawing takes place in an old growth forest in Mendocino County on June 23.

The suggested donation is \$2/ticket (see insert). We can't all win prizes, but together we can win the Forest! Additional tickets may be obtained at the GGAS office, Sierra Club offices at 6014 College Ave., Oakland, and 730 Polk Street, San Francisco. New Pieces, 1597 Solano Ave., Berkeley, also has them.

*Preserving the Ancient Forest is a top priority issue for National Audubon Society and the Sierra Club.

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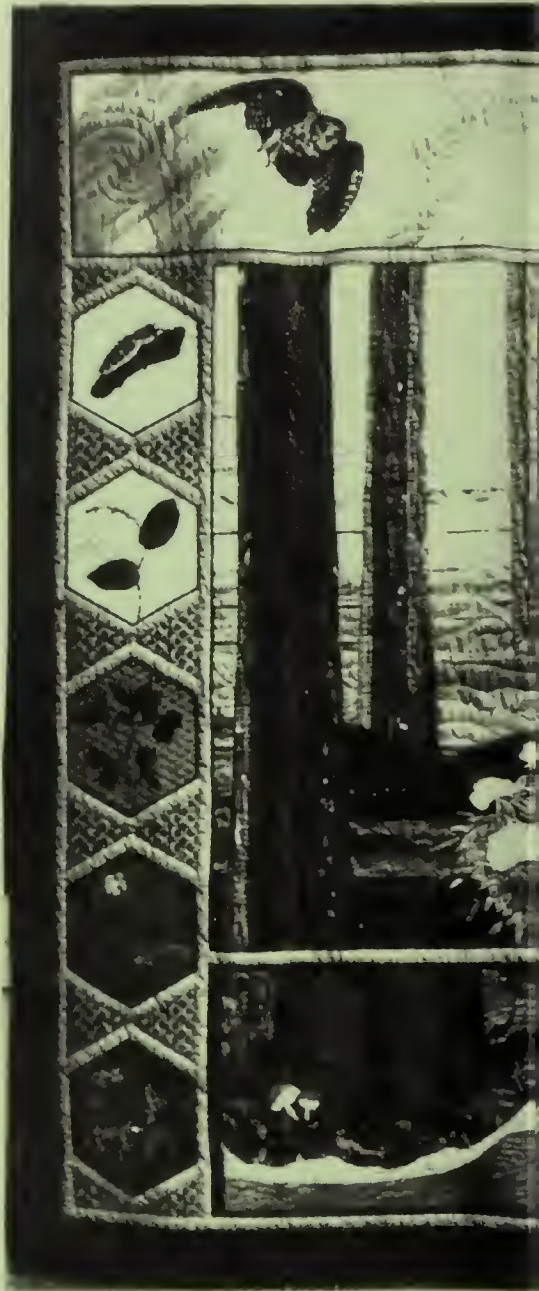
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To help support forestry legal work by Sierra Club and EPIC.



- Marine mammal print donated by w
- A day and night for two in Mendocino and sauna at Mendocino Tubs and d
- Jar of Siskiyou Mountain Wildflower
- Solar outdoor patio light and solar m Engineering in Garberville.
- One case of Frey Wine, from Frey W Wine).
- Framed photo of Waterfall on Willo see the waterfall - donated by Herb
- Artistic poster, original - donated by
- Piece of original pottery, - valued at

Please make out checks to **Sierra Club** tickets to Genji Schmeder, Treasurer

QUILT



Benefit Drawing

Multicolor
75" x 95"

Quilt depicts the
ecosystem of
the north coast's
forests.

Suggested
Donation: \$2 per
ticket. Drawing
will be held
23 June 1990
in an ancient
redwood grove.

MORE PRIZES

Artist John Steel.

bed and breakfast at Rachel's Inn, hot tub
a restaurant.

donated by Mickey Dulas.

box, both donated by Alternative Energy

ds in Redwood Valley (Certified Organic

x, - and - guided tour along Willow Creek to
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- donated by Wild Wood Gallery in Ukiah.

Project and send with filled out blocks of
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BACK YARD BIRDER

Simply taming a wild bird is not domestication, which occurs when a bird will live in or around man's home, under his care. Domesticated birds are those which have been bred in captivity for generations because of their economic usefulness to man. In addition to their importance as food, some birds are a source of feathers, while others are merely ornamental. Curiously, relatively few birds have been domesticated.

Pigeons may have been the first birds raised by man way back in the New Stone Age. However, the earliest proof of pigeon-breeding by man appears in terra cotta figurines from Iraq dated about 4500 B.C. Rock Doves all derive from the Common Pigeon of the Old World. Sadly, they have become a nuisance in cities, carriers of diseases. In the beginning they were a meat source and later were used for their message-carrying and homing capabilities. They were vital in ancient days as well as during WW I and WW II for keeping leaders informed of battles and conquests.

Naturalists agree that the European greylag goose is the ancestor of all barnyard geese of today, except for the Chinese goose. The latter was developed by selective breeding from the Asiatic swan goose and is an excellent "watch goose." Greylags are used mainly for meat and for their down, just as they were in Egyptian days 4000 years ago.

Duck bones have been discovered from the Stone Age, indicating that prehistoric man was as much a gourmand as Narsai David! It seems that duck meat has always been esteemed by man. The wild mallard is the ancestor

of all domestic ducks except the Muscovy. Mallards were first raised in Roman times when they were fattened for food. The Muscovy Duck is from So. America, domesticated by the Indians of Colombia and Peru and taken by early European explorers to Europe in the mid-16th century. It has lost favor because it cannot compete with the savory Pekin Duck, a descendant of the wild duck developed by the Chinese.

Only one North American bird has been truly domesticated: the turkey. Natives of the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico bred turkeys in captivity. Spanish explorers took the birds to Spain where its popularity spread to England and Europe. Early colonists of the U.S. brought turkeys with them, where they mixed with the wild north-eastern birds and became the fore-runners of our domestic stock. The present popularity of turkeys began only in about 1935! Today they represent a major portion of the poultry industry.

Chickens were descended from forest-dwelling gallinaceous species in India and southern Asia. They seem to have been domesticated before 3000 BC and spread westward via China and the Middle East. They reached No. America in colonial times but were in evidence long before in So. America during pre-Colombian times. Raising chickens for eggs and meat is a major industry in the U.S.

Guinea fowl all descend from a strictly African family. They have been introduced many times into Europe and America but have not "developed" and look much like their wild ancestors. They are raised mainly for their meat.

Pheasants have never been fully domesticated. They were brought from Asia to Greece in the 1st century AD and remained a game bird of the rich for ages. Only recently has the pheasant

become firmly established in the wild in many parts of Europe and No. America.

Peafowl (Peacocks and Peahens) are native to S. E. Asia and have been bred in captivity for centuries as ornamental (*AND* noisy) birds. The peacock has always been a symbol of pride.

As a birdwatcher it is somewhat discomfiting to imagine my dinner in its former state. I scarcely think of chicken, turkey and duck as birds per se. It's a matter of conditioning. If I had to hunt my food, my perspective would be different. While birds of all sizes and kinds have been eaten through the millenia, hopefully the birds which have been domesticated make up the majority of those consumed.

—MEG PAULETICH

GGAS 1990 TEXAS TOUR

The GGAS 1990 Texas Tour was a resounding success. The tour, led by Chris Carpenter, recorded 203 species for a week of birding the Upper Texas Coast area. Highlights included 19 species of shorebirds at Bolivar, Roseate Spoonbill, Hudsonian Godwit, 7 species of tern seen from the Galveston ferry, both cuckoos, Painted Bunting, Bachman's Sparrow and red-cockaded, Red-headed, Red-bellied, Hairy and Pileated Woodpeckers all seen in the same forest on the first morning.

The seven participants in the group saw every North American egret and heron. Imagine seeing, as we did, both Whistling Ducks, Caracara, White-tailed Hawk and Greater Prairie Chicken all from the same spot! On our last day the weather changed and the best fallout in recent memory hit High

Island. This resulted in our seeing 24 species of warbler in one day, 28 total for the tour. Best were Golden-winged, Worm-eating, Cerulean, Kentucky, Canada, Swainson's and both Waterthrushes.

NEW AUDUBON CHAPTER FORMED

Costa Rica is a special country for GGAS members who have enjoyed learning of its natural resources at members meetings or on birding vacations. With over 850 species, Costa Rica is also critically important for resident and migratory birds.

Costa Rica is now also the home of the newest National Audubon Society chapter; Asociaion Tsuli Tsuli de Costa Rica. Fittingly, recognition for the new members was given at the first international NAS Board of Directors meeting in San Jose.

Tsuli Tsuli members have a goal of becoming the strongest and largest grass roots conservation organization in that country. They also want to provide an opportunity for joint action with the US chapters on projects of mutual interest and concern.

If you are interested in learning more about Tsuli Tsuli and how you might support their efforts, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Trish Mulvey, 527 Rhodes Drive, Palo Alto, CA 94303. Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society members Trish and Jim Mulvey attended the National Audubon Society Board meeting and were impressed and excited by the energy, enthusiasm and issue focus of the new organization.

PAUL COVEL by Larry Spears
from *THE TRIBUNE*, Oakland Calif.

Paul F. Covell, a pioneering naturalist who turned Lake Merritt into an outdoor wilderness school for thousands of East Bay children—and their parents—died May 2 at 81.

In Mr. Covell, Oakland had the West's first park naturalist outside the National Park Service.

At the Rotary Natural Science Center and Lake Merritt bird sanctuary, Mr. Covell, a ranger's peaked hat shading energetically friendly eyes, shared his excitement about birds and plants and snakes and bees.

Hired by then-Oakland park chief William Penn Mott in 1947, Mr. Covell helped create a new kind of naturalist, one who interpreted nature, explaining to people how wild animals and plants live in their environments.

Traditionally, naturalists had confined themselves to discovering, identifying and collecting the things of nature.

"This was an age when naturalists started to combine a love of nature with a love of people," Covell's son, James, said yesterday. "Out of this came the modern naturalists, the interpreters. It was a brand new field. Everyone was self-taught. There was nowhere to go to get trained."

Mr. Covell, a high school graduate, was a self-taught and respected authority on birds and botany and a number of other subjects.

At 17, he was head keeper of the San Diego Zoo's bird collection. He hitchhiked to New York and got a job scaling skins in the taxidermy department of the American Museum of Natural History. After some wildlife expeditions to Panama and elsewhere, he came to the Bay Area and in 1931 joined the staff of the old Oakland Museum. In 1934 he started giving bird talks at Lake Merritt.

Mott said yesterday that he hired Mr. Covell to "create a real interpretive system, one that had never been done before." Mr. Covell, he said, was ideal, both in his knowledge and his ability to excite the public about wildlife. At Lake Merritt, while people fed the pelicans and geese, history was made in the naturalist profession.

"He never walked out without a camera and binoculars," said James Covell, who coordinates the acclaimed interpretive program at the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Mr. Covell liked to take his family to museums and parks. "It was a good thing we all enjoyed it," James Covell said, "because there wasn't much choice."

He helped to establish the San Francisco Bay Association, Audubon Canyon Ranch in Marin County, and the Farallones National Wilderness Area. He campaigned in many environmental battles for bay, marshes and hills.

After retiring from the park district in 1975, he kept busy, leading hikes, giving talks, working on environmental causes. His second book was published two years ago.

"He never really retired," said Stephanie Benavidez, the Lake Merritt animal keeper and one of the first woman interpreters hired by Mr. Covell in 1975. "I grew up in Oakland," said Benavidez. "He taught me that same kind of love for nature."

Last week, Mr. Covell asked someone else to replace him on a bird hike, commenting that he felt tired. Last Sunday he supervised some trail repairs at Joaquin Miller Park. On Wednesday he died quietly at home.

"That was like him, to keep on going," said Benavidez.

Editor's Note:

Paul joined GGAS (then the Pacific Audubon Society) in July 1932. He was

chapter president Feb. 1957–59, chairman of the conservation committee from 1962–1975, and always a contributor to the columns of *The GULL* with and without a by-line.

THANKS, OWL FANS

The response to our request for Burrowing Owl locations in Alameda County, past and present, in *The GULL* for March was greater than we ever expected. At least 35 of you wrote or called with information to help us map the locations of Burrowing Owls in the county. The responses revealed about 16 Burrowing Owl locations. There must be more, so keep looking.

As yet, we have not compiled the information, primarily because we want to develop a data program that will have a broad based value, coordinated with other counties that are doing similar studies with Burrowing Owls. Sheila Larson of Union city has volunteered to help with data compilation.

Our long term goal is to have each site adopted by a reliable observer so that our data can be updated regularly. It will also be important to know the owners of the sites and the proposed land use of the property.

But for now we want very much just to thank you. Some people wrote detailed accounts of several years of observations and provided good maps of the active burrow locations. These dedicated and disciplined birders have provided extremely valuable information. Others wrote letters giving detailed or general information. Some called to share their observations. To all of you, we thank you very much. We will share with you as soon as possible more details about the number of sites, general locations, numbers of birds, etc.

—LEORA FEENEY

SUMMER 1990

The Sierra Nevada Field Campus of the San Francisco State University,

located on the scenic North Fork of the Yuba River provides a spectacular variety of organisms and geological features making its course offerings unusual. Information can be obtained by phoning the School of Science at the Field Campus, (916) 862-1230. Offerings of particular interest to birders are:

June 18–22 Birds of the Sierra with Dave Shuford

June 4–8 Bird Identification by Song With Luis Baptista

August 11–13 A Bird Banding Workshop with Dave DeSante

SFBBO CLASSES

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory announces classes for the remainder of the year. All classes, open to members and others, are held in the newly renoved classroom. Information as to details can be had by writing them at P.O. Box 247, Alviso, CA 95002, or by phoning (408) 946-6548.

July, Dave Martin: Taxidermic Techniques

August, Don Starks and Paul Noble: Shorebird Identification

November, Paul Noble: Duck Identification

BIENNIAL CONVENTION

Save the week of July 21–27, 1991 for the next national convention of the Audubon Society. It was announced for the popular YMCA of the Rockies (Estes Park, Colorado), and in a time period especially attractive for educators, youth and families.

AUDUBON TELEVISION

GE (General Electric Company) has made a three-year grant to Audubon to support the award winning television series. GE becomes the exclusive underwriter for these programs. Audubon has exclusive control over content—a tradition we are proud of.

NATURE SOUND RECORDING WORKSHOP

The Nature Sounds Society will be holding its sixth Annual Field Recording Workshop June 15-17. This year's speakers include nature sounds recordist/producer Jonathan Storm from Puget Sound, Professor Emeritus/Biology SF State University Dr. Robert Bowman, bird song recordist and ornithologist David Cornman and Northern California authorized Nagra service specialist Dan Dugan. The weekend features workshops, demonstrations and field recording opportunities. It is designed both for beginning and experienced sound recordists. Held at the SF State University Field Station at Yuba Pass in the Sierra Nevada. The cost is \$130 (\$120 for

NSS members). Scholarships are available. For information call 549-9364.

OAKLAND MUSEUM NEEDS DOCENTS

Men and women are being sought for a one year natural sciences training course for docents at the Oakland Museum. The course will begin Sept. 4 and continue through June 1991.

Training will be conducted by John Luther of the College of Alameda and will meet from 1 to 4 p.m. Tuesdays at the Museum. Subject matter is California's natural communities and basic principles of ecology. No previous science background is required. For information and to request an application for acceptance to the training program, call 273-3514.

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The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1250 Addison St., #107B, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

EXPERIENCED BACKPACKERS

Howard Williams writes that as part of his Marin Birdsong program (see *The GULL* for March, p. 47) he is organizing a four day backpack Friday through Monday, June 29 to July 2, into the western side of the Trinity Alps Wilderness, off Hwy. 3 above Weaver-ville to observe a rich assortment of mountain birds and to learn their songs. Audubon members who are experienced backpackers are invited to phone him at (415) 925-2508.

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

What's up at the Ranch? Well, everything.

The Ranch remains open until July 15. Ranch Guides will be at the marsh and a few other spots to tell you the ongoing tale of the herons, the egrets and the eagle. We'll be counting butterflies in Marin on June 30 and in Sonoma on July 1. Of course you can learn about butterfly identification with Ray Peterson at "Getting to Know the Critters Night" on June 21 (\$4).

Woops! We slipped up on the date for Natural History for Teachers. It will be held on July 16 through 20, not the dates published in the Bulletin. If you're a teacher interested in developing your skills in natural history education this is the class for you (\$160 includes the fee for 3 semester units). Fill your calendar with one or more Ranch activities. Call Edris at (415) 868-9244 for reservations.

1-2-3 AND EVEN MORE

We counted newts at Bouverie Preserve. The little things must be all over the place because a class of 18 eighth graders managed to account for

over 500 on a 1200 meter stretch of Stuart Creek. Our regular newt census is in its 4th year. Rarely seen red-bellied newts account for over 90% of our residents. Rough-skinned and California newts account for the rest.

Shorebird and waterbird counts on Tomales Bay are a big part of our winter and spring endeavors. This year we're trying to determine if the new aquaculture leases have an impact on the bay's avifauna.

In the first year of our 5-year shorebird census we found the early winter count of 18,000 birds dropped to about 10,000 by late winter. The difference was due mostly to catching the Dunlin at their winter peak early in the season. In addition to our common species we found small wintering populations of Red Knots and Pacific Golden Plovers.

Equally exciting was our winter waterbird census. Can you believe 24,000 total birds, including 10,000 Surf Scoters, 99 Black Scoters, 5100 Bufflehead, 61 Red-necked Grebes, and a few Oldsquaws, Harlequin Ducks, Fork-tailed Storm Petrels and Rhinoceros Auklets? We did get 3 boats out for each census, but there wasn't even a significant Pacific herring run this season. Just wait until the drought ends and the fish run.

You will no doubt be joining our annual butterfly count on June 30 and July 1. It will take place just about everywhere. Let's face it, you count birds at Christmas for the Audubon Society, now you can jump on the Xeres Society's bandwagon and count butterflies around the Fourth of July.

We're not finished yet. Join us in our new project to monitor Great Blue Heron colonies in Marin and Sonoma counties. If you're interested call John Kelly (415) 663-8203.

On the other hand if you just come to the Ranch our busy counters will count you too.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR TREES?

Yes! March 31 marked the first annual Oak Day at Bouverie Audubon Preserve. Think of it as a birthday party for our new oak trees. It's an opportunity for the children who planted the oak trees to see how their efforts have matured during the past 2 years.

THISTLE CONTROL

The weevils we used to control thistles at Cypress Grove and at Bolinas Lagoon Preserves seem to have had too low an impact. That doesn't mean we're ready to give-up, so we're looking for other alternatives to reduce thistle and poison hemlock growth. By removing these pervasive species we hope to encourage the growth of native grasses and herbs.

THANKS...

...to John Petersen and John Kelly for the information which made this column possible.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW EMPLOYEES

By now you have probably met our new Weekend Coordinator, Ken Browning. Ken is an experienced Ranch Guide and a professional photographer.

Fairfax Donovan has taken the job as Bouverie Audubon Preserve Administrative Coordinator. She is a docent at the Bouverie preserve.

DOCENT CLASS '90

Here is your chance to join the next class of ACR docent volunteers. These are the wonderful women and men who give their time, effort and expertise to our nationally acclaimed education program. Their reward is the joy of seeing visiting school children discover for the very first time wonders of nature many of us take for granted. If you wish to become an active participant in our education program. If you can give time on spring and fall weekdays, if you wish to broaden your own knowledge and skill as an amateur naturalist, apply to join the 1990 Docent Training Class. For more information call (415) 868-9244.

—DAN MURPHY





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Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$10 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917,
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.